

# ON THE BRINK

## The Politics of Conflict 1914-1916 Project

### FOCUS STORIES

#### COMMEMORATION

##### **Ballyclare War Memorial**

The Ballyclare War Memorial was unveiled on 9th November 1930, within Ballyclare War Memorial Park. The local branch of the British Legion was instrumental in raising funds to purchase land, and commissioning a cenotaph of Mourne granite, inscribed with the names of soldiers who had lost their lives. In November 2010 the Ballyclare War Memorial was unveiled once again, after refurbishment and extension. Several local people also helped to uncover a number of names which had been omitted from the memorial, which were then added.

##### **Knockagh War Memorial**

The war memorial on Knockagh Hill, above Greenisland, commemorates the war dead of County Antrim. The site overlooks Belfast and Belfast Lough. It is the largest war memorial in Ulster, modelled on the Wellington Monument in Phoenix Park in Dublin. The memorial was completed in the mid-1930s. However, the memorial was never finalised according to the original design; those responsible for raising funds were never able to raise enough money to finish it. After the Second World War, the memorial was re-dedicated in 1988, to those from the county who had died during both wars. Carrickfergus Borough Council hosted proceedings, since the memorial lies within its boundaries. Reverend Dr J.M Henry, chaplain to the Mayor of Carrickfergus, performed the re-dedication. Other participants in the ceremony included the Lord Lieutenant for County Antrim and the Northern Ireland Area Chairman of the Royal British Legion.

##### **St. Nicholas Church (Heroes' Tower)**

By the end of 1919, the building of a campanile in St Nicolas' Church of Ireland Churchyard, Carrickfergus, was underway to commemorate their war dead. It was given the name 'Heroes' Tower' and housed a peal of eight bells. A plaque was also erected remembering the fallen from the congregation. In 1959, Heroes' Tower was deemed structurally unsafe and was demolished. In 1962, it was replaced with a bell tower, whose bells rang each morning on the 1st July. This mark of respect to the fallen only ceased in recent years.

##### **Bushmills War Memorial & Robert Quigg VC Sculpture**

The Bushmills War Memorial was unveiled on 5 November 1921, costing £1,300. The memorial portrays a life-size bronze statue of a rifleman positioned on a concrete base. Inscribed in the base of the monument are the words, 'To the men of this town and district who gave their lives and country in the Great War 1914-1918'.

Additionally, 20 years ago, a plaque dedicated to Robert Quigg who received the Victoria Cross for his bravery during the Battle of the Somme was placed at the base of the Bushmills War Memorial. Recently, a life-size bronze sculpture of Robert Quigg has also been unveiled in Bushmills.

##### **Trench Memorial Band**

In March 1919, a group of young men in Limavady, met to consider setting up a memorial flute band, with the suggested name of the Trench Memorial Band. The band would commemorate those of their peers who had fallen in World War One and to honour Mrs Trench of Greystone Hall, who had worked so hard to raise funds to support local soldiers with the local Prisoners of War Fund. The group included discharged soldiers who felt especially grateful for Mrs Trench's efforts. On Armistice Day 1920, the Trench Memorial Band played patriotic airs through the streets.

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#### Jack White and First Broughshane Presbyterian Church

Jack White was the son of Sir George White, a hero of the siege of Ladysmith during the Boer War. He was largely brought up in England, but when his father died in 1912, he travelled back home. His family lived at Whitehall, approximately a mile from Broughshane.

When he returned, White became heavily involved in supporting Home Rule, but also identified himself with the workers' cause, helping to establish the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) with Jim Larkin. In 1914, White left the ICA and joined the Irish Volunteers. When war broke out in 1914, White believed the Volunteers should be used as an Ireland-based territorial army defending the country against possible German invasion. He had no success, as Irishmen were already being recruited into the regular forces. Therefore, White decided to go to France and serve as an ambulance driver, but was met with suspicion of his known credentials as an Irish nationalist.

On hearing news of the Easter Rising, White is believed to have returned from France. When Connelly was in jail awaiting execution for his part in the rebellion, White tried to get Welsh miners to strike in his support. He was arrested and given a short sentence for sedition, being transferred from Swansea to Pentonville Prison in London the day before Roger Casement was executed there for treason.

In 1945, White offered himself as a republican socialist candidate for North Antrim in the general election. However, within six months he had died of cancer in Belfast. He is buried in the White family plot in the First Broughshane Presbyterian Church. His tombstone records that he was Sir George White's son, but no further details are documented.



Jack White on military parade with the ICA.  
Mid-Antrim Museum

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#### **Roger Casement and Murlough Bay**

On the anniversary of the death of Roger Casement, August 1916, the McCarry family hold an annual memorial service at the place in Murlough Bay where Casement wished to be buried. In 1929, the family erected a stone cross in memory of Patrick McCarry and three close friends, one of whom was Roger Casement.

Casement was executed on 3rd August 1916 for his role in the Easter Rising and was buried in an unmarked grave in Pentonville Prison, rather than at his beloved Murlough Bay as he had hoped. Casement's death was quickly integrated into public memory of the Easter Rising and is remembered by Irish nationalists as one of the 16 Irish martyrs who died for Irish freedom. In August 1953, at an official ceremony at Murlough Bay, Taoiseach Éamon de Valera called for a return of Casement's remains and chose a site for internment. In 1965, on the condition that it was never exhumed again, his body was repatriated to Ireland and buried at Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.